

Idaho Specialty Crops Assistance

October 24, 2003

Allocation Breakdown:

- Competitive Grants Program (\$2,000,000)
- Idaho Food Quality Assurance Lab/ University of Idaho (\$257,000)
- Potato Industry: Testing for Seed Potato Crop (\$283,000)
- Market Promotion and Assistance (\$650,000)
- Biosecurity and Food Safety (\$269,000)
- Idaho Trade Issues (\$261,000)
- Pests and Diseases (\$275,000)
- University of Idaho Waste Management Research (\$175,000)
- Emergency Food Assistance Program (\$44,047)

Idaho Receives \$4.2 Million Specialty Crop Grant

Idaho received \$4.2 million dollars in September 2001 to assist specialty crop producers in Idaho. The state received the fourth largest allocation of funding, which was made available to individual states through the Emergency Agricultural Assistance Act.

The grant specifically awarded \$500,000 to the Idaho State Department of Agriculture's Division of International Trade and Domestic Market Development for use in the state's marketing and promotion efforts. Additionally, \$44,047 was earmarked for costs related to transporting and distributing commodities through the Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983. The remainder of the money is being used for research, programs and competitive grants as requested by producers in the state.



Governor Dirk Kempthorne stated, "Idaho and U.S. producers face higher tariffs and greater pest and disease restrictions than producers in any other country. In the meantime, our markets are being flooded by imports. These funds are a tremendous opportunity to help our struggling agricultural community with increased marketing efforts – both domestically and internationally."

Competitive Crop Grants Fund Innovation

The Idaho State Department of Agriculture designed a program based on input from specialty crops producers when distributing the funds given to the state. The majority of the money was placed into a competitive grants program.

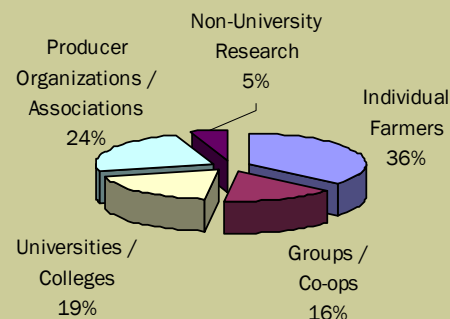
This program's focus was to fund as many high-priority agriculture industry projects as possible in a manner that was equitable and meaningful while promoting innovation.

The program specifically looked for collaborative projects that would have measurable results with evidence of economic need and long-term benefit.

Almost \$2 million was awarded through 56 grants over two rounds of applications. Total matching funds to date for

these projects amount to over \$818,000, with another \$224,000 pledged. Many of the projects are not yet completed, but preliminary results show great promise.

Types of Grant Recipients



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Competitive Grants Program

Round 1

Chefs at the Market

Capital City Public Market: \$36,000

"Chefs at the Market" is a unique program bringing local chefs and market vendors together to form a cooking demonstration partnership that draws shoppers to the market and downtown Boise. In 2002, twelve guest chefs conducted eighteen cooking demonstration, and thirteen chefs participated in 2003. The resulting media exposure and larger attendance at the market contributed to an increase of overall sales at the market by nearly 20%. The program is popular with market patrons and the city's chefs, and "Kids Cook at the Market" was added as a children's element of the program. Capital City Public Market plans to continue to offer the service. Grant ends October 31, 2003.

Idaho Mountain Blueberries

Cedar Springs Farms: \$25,000

Grant funds allowed a small blueberry operation to expand to five acres and help supply local demand. Small blueberry plants were bought, nurtured through the winter and are expected to provide excellent yields. This blueberry project has the potential to become a blueprint for other small acreage farms in providing jobs and resource diversification in rural communities. Grant completed June 30, 2003.

Cut Flowers Production

City View Flower Farm: \$5,700

This project covers a mall-acreage cut flower production and sales operation. This operation's total sales from ½ acre under production during 2002 were \$2,204.20, which exceeded estimated revenues of \$2,000. A drip tape irrigation system was proven to be an ergonomically, economically and environmentally desirable method of raising flowers for cutting and growing ornamentals such as pumpkins, gourds and broomcorn. Grant completed June 30, 2003.

Crop Management Practices on Pollinators in Alfalfa Seed

Idaho Alfalfa Seed and Clover Growers Association: \$46,500

This project focuses on the compatibility of pest and pollinator management programs in alfalfa seed production in Idaho. The association is investigating the effects of pesticides and other pest management practices on pollinators, and crop pollination. These studies will be published and will most likely help not only alfalfa seed producers, but producers of seed and fruit crops requiring insect pollination as well. Grant ends December 31, 2004.



Interactive Website

Idaho Apple Commission: \$7,500

An interactive website has been created to increase consumer awareness of Idaho apples and provide an easy-to-access source of information on shippers in the state. Grant ends April 30, 2004.

Anthraxnose Screening of Seed

Idaho Bean Commission: \$5,000

This pilot program screened imported dry bean seed samples for the presence of the disease anthracnose; any trace of the disease could ruin Idaho's reputation as a producer of disease-free seed. All test results were negative. Grant completed April 30, 2003.

Dry Bean Seed Sales Initiative for North America and Mexico

Idaho Bean Commission: \$62,000

The Idaho Bean Commission used funding provided by this grant to promote Idaho's dry bean seed in the United States, Mexico and Canada. In August, members of the Mexico Dry Bean Growers Council visited Idaho to learn about the state's dry bean seeds, and two members of the Commission attended the Governor's Trade Mission to Mexico to meet with members of the Mexico Bean Council, the Mexico Government Agriculture Department and others. Funds have allowed the Commission to produce a video promoting dry bean seed production, obtain a new table-top booth and attend grower meetings in both Mexico and Canada. Grant ends April 1, 2004.

University Foodservice Vegetarian Meals Promotion

Idaho Bean Commission: \$33,000

The College & University Foodservice Vegetarian Meals Promotion Program aimed to increase the awareness and usage of Idaho dry beans in the college and university segments of the foodservice industry by creating and cooperating with the National Association of College & University Foodservices (NACUFS). A contest was held to recognize and reward innovative vegetarian meal plans and menu items using Idaho dry beans. Developed recipes were quality-tested and can

be used in food trade magazines for several years. Grant completed July 31, 2003.

Weather Network

Idaho Hop Commission: \$28,000

Weather stations have been installed to determine the effect of the pest forecasting model of hop powdery mildew. Preliminary data indicates that growers who used the disease forecasting model controlled the disease with fewer sprays than growers not using the model. Grant ends November 30, 2003.

Weed Control in Mint

Idaho Mint Commission: \$8,000

A weed control project will determine which herbicide combinations prove the best control for field bindweed, groundsel and pigweed. This project will address weed problems in Idaho mint production by evaluating combinations and application timing of currently registered herbicides. Completed activities include a study to evaluate post-emergence prickly lettuce control in peppermint. Current activities include evaluating field bindweed control using MCPB. Grant ends October 31, 2003.

Mint Variety Assessment

Idaho Mint Commission: \$8,600

This project involved planting a test plot in Parma at the University of Idaho Research and Extension Center to measure the overall performance of selected mint varieties in relation to currently accepted standard varieties. The peppermint line B90-9 showed promise as a potentially superior oil yielding variety in the first year. Grant completed March 31, 2003.

Season Extension for Organic Lettuce

Idaho Organics Cooperative: \$25,000

This pilot project is researching in-season extension techniques for organic lettuce production. It sets the groundwork for other producers interested in lettuce production. During the 2003 growing season, the cooperative harvested spring and summer lettuce and planted fall lettuce in the greenhouse. Grant ends December 31, 2003.

Truck Transportation Supply Promotion for Onions and Apples

Idaho-Oregon Fruit and Vegetable Association: \$12,000

The association is increasing the number of available trucks and develop additional means of transportation during peak truck shortage periods of Idaho apples and Idaho-Eastern Oregon onions. During the 2002 shortage period, the association was able to attract 125 additional trucks to haul apple and onions using a fuel certificate redemption program. Grant ends April 30, 2004.

School on the Farm: An Educational Experience

Koto Farms: \$25,000

"School on the Farm: An Educational Experience" has developed an educational farm program for scheduled school tours. This program taps a new market for Idaho specialty crop producers and serves as a model for an innovative on-farm marketing strategy. As of December 31, 2002, 434 students, 19 teachers and 98 parent/adult chaperones have participated. Grant ends December 31, 2003.

Pesticide Management Commission

Minor Crop Alliance: \$100,000

This funding provided the initial investment to create the Idaho State Pesticide Management Commission. The commission is seeking to help minor crop growers in the state obtain pesticide products for controlling critical pest problems. Providing the necessary tools to raise healthy and profitable crops in Idaho ensures the diversity needed to maintain a healthy agricultural community in our state. Grant ends April 30, 2004.

Gasification of Pelletized Crop Waste Residue for Energy Production

Renaissance Engineering & Design: \$65,000

This organization tested and evaluated several specific agriculture waste feedstock for commercial and private gasification as a means to generate process heating and/or electricity (cogeneration). Preliminary data shows that actual impacts of the varying mineral contents in waste products can be as much of an issue in the pelletizing process as it is in the final gasification process itself. Grant completed September 30, 2003.

Market Development and Expansion

Sandstone Farms: \$50,000

This market and production expansion project of specialty foods and high-end products led to gross sales in 2002 that were five times that of 2001, with an additional growth of 125 percent projected for 2003. Products are now found nationally, and have been featured on a nationally syndicated television show. Grant completed April 30, 2003.



Development of Specialty Fruit Packaging

Symms Fruit Ranch, Inc.: \$45,000

Funding went towards the purchase of a machine for the

specialty packaging of fruit. Market demand is moving towards specialty packaging that holds smaller quantities of fruit per package. Specialty pack customers include large accounts such as Albertson's, Costco Company and Publix Supermarkets, as well as various Taiwanese accounts. Grant completed April 30, 2003.

**International Trade Mission and Market Trips
Symms Fruit Ranch, Inc.: \$30,000**

An international trade mission to Argentina, as well as marketing trips to Florida and California, succeeded in promoting interest in Idaho produce and establishing crucial relationships. These are both important when striving to increase market share and sales in those markets. Grant completed April 30, 2003.



**Concentrated Barley Protein for Fish Production
University of Idaho: \$75,000**

This project is determining the potential use of concentrated barley protein in fish diets nationally and globally, while also identifying a commercial fractionation process and evaluating markets for remaining co-products. The use of barley as a protein component in aquaculture feeds could lead to an additional demand of 1,640,000 metric tons worldwide. All findings up to this point have indicated that the fractionation of barley is a viable, innovative venture that will bring added value to the barley and aquaculture industries in Idaho. Grant ends December 31, 2003.

**Nematode Management Study in Potatoes
University of Idaho: \$98,000**

This project is developing an economically viable nematode management practice for the sustainable production of potatoes and sugar beets in Idaho. Grant ends September 30, 2004.

**Proportional Chemical Injection Control for Center Pivot
University of Idaho: \$10,000**

This study researched the cost-efficient flow of proportional chemical injection control for center pivot irrigation. The university collected results for educational materials to increase producer awareness about the need for flow-proportional injection systems with center pivot irrigation. Grant completed April 30, 2003.

**Development of Specialty and Alternative Fruit Crops,
Including Table Grapes for Idaho
University of Idaho: \$100,000**

A project involving the development of specialty and alternative fruit crops for Idaho has yielded outstanding results, discovering possible wine and table grape varieties for Idaho. Researchers believe the table grape has become the best alternative fruit crop for the state. Other alternative fruit crops being researched include pomegranate, quince, persimmon, mulberry, Asian pear, fig and walnut. Grant ends April 30, 2004.

**Food Aid Promotion of Peas and Lentils
USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council: \$50,000**

The promotion of peas and lentils as a food aid component will educate private voluntary organizations involved in food aid projects throughout the world on the benefits of using peas and lentils as part of their food aid programs. Increased sales as a result of this promotion are expected to lead to \$7.7 million in payments at the grower level, with an additional 50,000 metric tons being sold. Grant ends June 30, 2004.

**Nationwide Promotion Campaign
USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council: \$15,000**

A nationwide promotion of peas, lentils and chickpeas will focused on taste, ease of preparation and the health benefits. The promotion included media events, advertising and participation in food shows in California and Washington D.C. Grant ends November 30, 2003.

**International Reverse Trade Mission
USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council: \$15,000**

An India Reverse Trade Mission brought in 5 major Indian lentil and chickpea buyers to see the Palouse and gain an understanding of the high standards in growing, processing, and shipping Idaho pulses. Buyers met with processors and exporters in Northern Idaho and have begun initiating purchases of peas and chickpeas. Grant completed April 30, 2003.

**Greens and Specialty Crop Pilot Project
Wood River Farmer's Market Association: \$45,000**

This winter greens and specialty crops pilot project evaluated season extension in four south central Idaho locations, extending the season up to five months in some areas. Results of the 2002 growing season are being made available to other small farms interested in extending their growing seasons. Grant completed April 30, 2004.

Round 2

**New Warmwater Fish for Aquaculture
ACE Development USA, Inc.: \$50,000**

This project is determining the potential and feasibility of several species of finfish for warm water aquaculture in

Idaho. So far, fish have adapted well to the system and commercial dry feeds. Goals of the project include marketing these fish at a premium price both domestically and internationally, while serving existing markets and creating new ones. Grant ends June 30, 2004.

Non Hardy Bulb & Perennial Flower Production

Bindweed Farm: \$6,700

Non-hardy bulb and perennial production was tested in the Northern climate of Eastern Idaho, utilizing low input hoop houses to expand the growing season for plant species not typically cultivated in this climate. Bindweed Farm identified several types of flowers that can be successfully grown, harvested and sold from colder climates, including Callas and Lobelia varieties. Grant completed June 30, 2003.

Specialty Food Processing

Blacks-Creek Specialties: \$75,000

Responding to a growing need for small-scale food processing facilities in Idaho, this grant funded the expansion of a commercial kitchen that currently serves as a processing facility for several successful value-added processing companies. The grant has increased efficiency and reduced facility rental costs for producers by 15 percent. Unique products manufactured by Blacks-Creek have jumped 300 percent from 35 to 105. Grant completed June 30, 2003.

Freeze Dried Huckleberries

Dorothy's, LLC: \$17,500

This project developed a freeze-dried huckleberry ingredient for the specialty food industry in Idaho. Dorothy's will market this ingredient to Idaho food producers and stimulate the development of new products from several different Idaho companies, thereby increasing the market share for Idaho produced specialty foods. Grant ends December 31, 2003.

Commercial Onion Blossom Production



Great American Appetizers: \$75,000

Equipment was purchased to support the process and method used to create specialty onion and vegetable appetizer products. This equipment allowed Great American to secure a contract with Popeye's, a national chain, to process some 3,500,000 pounds of product a year. The contract with Popeye's will require an initial purchase of approximately 4,500,000 pounds of raw onions from Idaho growers. Grant completed February 28, 2003.

Bacterial Wilt Dry Bean Seed Testing Program

Idaho Bean Commission: \$5000

Funds were allocated to test random samples of dry bean seed grown in Idaho for bacterial diseases. Test results from the program will be used to confirm that Idaho bean seed is free from all bacterial diseases, including bacterial wilt, and can continue to be marketed as disease-free seed in the future. Grant ends March 31, 2004.

Building an Idaho- Eastern Oregon Onion Identity

Idaho-Eastern Oregon Onion Committee: \$20,000

Grant funds were used to build awareness of yellow onions from the Idaho-Eastern Oregon growing region, highlighting the mild flavor and excellent quality during a tour for category managers of major retail chains. Grant completed September 30, 2004.

Expo Agro Sinaloa

Idaho Farm Bureau: \$15,000

Grant funding allowed for a collaborative project between the Idaho Farm Bureau and Idaho agriculture commodity commissions and organizations to promote Idaho specialty crops at the 2003 Expo Agro Sinaloa trade show in Sinaloa, Mexico. The representatives who attended the show promoted all aspects of Idaho agriculture from production to food consumption. Grant completed March 31, 2003.



Promotional Campaign and Website Development

Idaho Grape Growers and Wine Producers

Commission: \$15,000

This grant was used to promote Idaho's grape and wine industry through the production and distribution of promotional materials. Promotions were placed in the 2003 Idaho Official State Travel Guide, 2002 Idaho Winery Brochures, the 2003 Southwest Idaho Travel Association and the Fall 2003 Skywest Magazine. Grant completed September 30, 2003.

Green Industry Promotion

Idaho Nursery and Landscape Association: \$30,000

This project aimed to increase the awareness of Idahoans about the state's nursery industry through a series of televi-

sion campaigns, print media campaigns and an exhibit booth. The association highlighted the value of purchasing nursery material grown in Idaho) while promoting basic plant care, maintenance and health. The Idaho Nursery and Landscape Association saw an increase in traffic on their website and calls to their toll-free number. Grant completed September 30, 2003.

Organic Agriculture Education & Promotional Initiative

Idaho Organic Alliance: \$20,000

Funding allows the Idaho Organic Alliance to better educate producers on organic production through on-farm tours of existing operations, a directory of organic producers and producers utilizing sustainable production practices, and the creation of an interactive website. Over 10,000 copies of the 2003 Local Foods Guide for Southern Idaho have been distributed at farmers' markets, county extension offices, public libraries, retail outlets and conferences. Three farm tours have succeeded in educating youth and adults about organic farming practices, and more tours are scheduled for next spring. Grant ends September 30, 2004.

Certified Organic Market Research

Idaho Organic Alliance: \$15,000

This grant is funding basic certified organic market research and the creation of a buyers guide to supplement the producer guide provided by the Idaho Department of Agriculture. Farmers need market research to plan for the marketing of their organic production. Without this information, it is difficult to sell enough product locally, produce enough product to market nationally, or find a market at all, forcing some farmers to sell organically grown products into the conventional market. Grant ends October 1, 2004.



Asparagus

L&M Landleveling, Inc.: \$7,500

This grant allowed for the expansion of an asparagus farm to determine if asparagus is a feasible alternative crop in Southeastern Idaho. The project focused on different varieties to determine which ones grew best in Idaho's soil and climate, along with what the market demand is for asparagus. Grant completed September 30, 2003.

Distribution, Marketing & Education of the Specialty Food Industry

Lewis and Clark Gifts: \$17,500

Funding is being used to develop a network of Idaho Specialty Food gift centers in retail stores around the state of Idaho. This includes participation at regional wholesale gift shows, a website to promote corporate gifts and gift baskets, and a series of workshops to promote business opportunities using Idaho specialty crops. Grant ends March 31, 2004.

Equipment for Farmers' Market Promotion

Mountain Home Farmers' Market: \$3,300

This farmers' market is benefiting from increased vendor participation as a result of efforts to publicize the market and involve as many new vendors and customers as possible. A brochure has been developed and the market will be advertised in a visitor's guide published by the Mountain Home News. Grant ends December 31, 2003.

Mustard Meal as a Natural Pesticide and Nitrogen Fertilizer

Paradise Farms Organic: \$50,000

Grant monies will fund research into the use of mustard meal as a natural pesticide and nitrogen fertilizer. Objectives include: producing a soil amendment that can be used by organic producers; decreasing the use of synthetic pesticides and the associated potential for environmental contamination; and developing an innovative, value-added industry for Idaho agriculture that will contribute to rural development. Initial trials have provided excellent data on seed emergence and nitrogen. Grant ends February 29, 2004.

Hybrid Poplar Product Development

Payette County and the Agricultural Wood Producers Association: \$20,000

Payette County and the Agricultural Wood Producers Association received this grant to conduct product testing and market research on Plantation Hybrid Trees for the purpose of creating an alternative agriculture product for local landowners. The project focused on testing materials and conducting a market study to identify potential products that are sustainable and profitable. Grant completed September 30, 2003.

Ag in the Classroom: Education on Leafcutter Bees

Pollination and Pest Management Consulting Services: \$17,500

The project "From Bees to Big Macs" will focus on the importance of pollination for the nation's food supply. A series of lesson plans, research projects and an interactive website will be developed around the leafcutting bee for grade school and high school classrooms. Ag in the Classroom will be the first vehicle for demonstrating this project. Grant ends December 31, 2003.

Inland Port Authority Feasibility Study
Potato Growers of Idaho / Idaho Produce
Transportation Improvement Coalition: \$50,000

Since transportation costs are a major component in the end price customers pay for Idaho goods, new methods of transporting good must be explored if Idaho is to remain competitive in the marketplace. Funds were used to study the feasibility of establishing an inland port authority to build, operate and maintain a central loading terminal for refrigerated containers and the assembly of unit trains to carry Idaho agricultural products. Grant completed September 30, 2003.



Market Development for Refrigerated Value Added
Potato Products
Purely Supreme Foods: \$40,000

A multi-faceted marketing program was created to develop new products and enhance the awareness of the "Purely Idaho" brands. A new product platform was created, along with packaging and a website. Grant completed September 30, 2003.

Pelletization of Crop Waste Residues for Gasification
Renaissance Engineering & Design: \$35,000

This project focused on the pelletization of crop waste residues for gasification. Research included the evaluation of the economics and equipment for the production of the crop waste pellets as well as the development of mixtures or recipes for agricultural waste pellets. Waste pellets could create a revenue stream by providing electricity and carbon from wastes that historically incur a disposal cost. Grant completed September 30, 2003.

Market Development and Expansion
Ronniger's Potato Farm: \$50,000

This grant is helping to fund expansion of the existing farm in order to capture additional market share in the seed potato market through increased efficiency and product diversification. Implementation of this project will allow them to continue to provide some of the only double certified seed potatoes available, which will help keep Idaho's reputation as the premier potato state strong. Grant ends December 31, 2003.

Develop On-line and Printed Specialty Crop Directory
Rural Roots: \$30,000

Grant funds will go to support the project, "Using Direct Marketing to Increase Idaho Specialty Crop Income." The project will entail producing an online, county-level GIS directory of Idaho Specialty Crops and retail outlets where they may be found. In addition, an instructional booklet on how to sell directly to restaurants will be produced and disseminated with grant funds. Through booklet sales and other sources of revenue, a printed version of the online directory will be made available in 2004. Grant ends April 30, 2004.

Organic Stone Fruits
Shiloh Fruits: \$25,000

Funding for this project allowed for the construction of an advanced sprinkler system to help develop a plumcot crop and increase the organic production of cherries, apricots and peaches. This system will help prevent potential frost damage, control insects, and control the application rate. Using an effective frost prevention system helps increase the quantity of fruit retained on the trees after late frosts, bringing more balance of production quantity from year to year. Grant completed September 30, 2003.

Garlic Seed Production
Southwind Farms: \$75,000

Restrictions on the importation of garlic seed into many parts of the state have limited the size of Idaho's garlic industry. Grant monies were used to expand the garlic seed production at a farm within a quarantined area from 6.5 acres to 35 acres. The increased supply will aid in the development of the garlic industry in Idaho. Grant completed September 30, 2003.

Plant Pest Identification
University of Idaho: \$12,800

Grant funds will enable the Department of Plant, Soil and Entomological Sciences (PSES) to purchase microscope and specimen storage cabinets. New equipment will allow PSES to retain specimens for future reference and provide prompt, accurate responses to pest situations, minimize crop damage and control costs for the producer. In addition, ensuring the absence of quarantined pests avoids legal constraints on agriculture exports. Grant completed September 30, 2003.

Specialty Foods Entrepreneurship / Commercial Kitchen

University of Idaho Business and Technology Incubator: \$52,000

This project will help the University equip a commercial kitchen/pilot plant. The facility will provide affordable and convenient access for specialty food entrepreneurs to increase the production and profitability of their products. Grant funds are also being used to provide extensive business and technical assistance to specialty food processors on-site and through statewide outreach. Grant ends September 30, 2003.

Idaho Food Quality Assurance Lab / University of Idaho



The specialty crop grant funding allocation of \$257,000 to the Idaho Food Quality Assurance Lab was used to update aging instrument infrastructure. Among purchases were analytical measurement devices consisting of a chromatograph, which is a separation tool, and a detector.

Along with the measurement devices, the IFQAL was able to purchase computers, software and printers, which have almost doubled laboratory efficiency. The lab now has the ability to look for compounds that

were not detectable with the older equipment.

Now, with improved efficiency of earlier capabilities, the lab is looking to expand its presence. This could provide significant assistance to Idaho agriculture both in residue screening and research.

For more information on this project, contact Michael A. Bacerra, Laboratory Manager, Idaho Food Quality Assurance Laboratory at (208) 732-5325.

Protecting Our Potato Industry: Testing for Seed Potato Crop

In the fall of 2001, the presence of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in potatoes became a concern because of recent finds in potato product shipped to Japan. GMOs in potatoes were developed by Monsanto as a way of putting resistance against potato beetle and certain viruses into the plant. The end goal was a plant requiring fewer inputs with an additional benefit of the reduced use of pesticides in the environment. Consumer rejection of this concept has caused processors to demand GMO-free seed sources. At the same time, concerns about strains in the potato virus Y (PVY) complex caused seed potato producing states to take a close look at the health of the seed sources that "feed" the system.

The Idaho Crop Improvement Association worked as a service lab to the seed potato industry to test seed lots for the presence of GMOs. In addition, the University of Idaho undertook a study to test seed lots

for the presence or absence of new PVY strains. The seed and commercial portions of Idaho's potato industry put their support behind these studies. The importance of this testing has not gone unnoticed. In a recent newsletter, the U.S. Potato Board commended the Idaho industry and growers for their complete efforts to address the GMO issue.

Dr. Phil Nolte's University of Idaho laboratory has also surveyed seed lots for PVYn in each of the last two years. The information obtained has been used to help Idaho seed producers remove potential virus sources from the Idaho system. The information was provided back to the growers in the form of lab test results for the PVY complex.

For more information on seed potato crop testing, contact Colleen Thompson at (208)522-9198 or Dr. Phil Nolte at (208)529-8376.

Market Promotion and Assistance

The Idaho Preferred™ program is preparing for its public launch scheduled for the end of the summer/harvest time period. The statewide promotion is being designed to educate consumers about the variety of agricultural products we produce in Idaho and drive them to seek Idaho food and agriculture by looking for the Idaho Preferred™ label.



The Idaho Preferred™ program is actively engaging the food retail and distribution community to win their endorsement and support of the program. More details on this exciting component of the program will be coming soon.

To qualify for participation in the program, fresh

produce, meat, and commodities must be 100 percent grown and raised in Idaho. Processed food and beverage products must contain a minimum of 20 percent agricultural content grown or raised in Idaho. The percentage of agricultural content and the percentage of the value added to the product in the state of Idaho must total no less than 80 percent. The requirements are defined in the Participation Application and program rules.

For more information on the Idaho Preferred Program, look online at www.idahopreferred.com or contact Peter Mundt, Idaho State Department of Agriculture at (208) 332-8530.

Biosecurity and Food Safety

Specialty Crop funds were utilized to fund positions for an animal health inspector and a veterinary medical officer (veterinarian).

The animal health inspector inspects farms, feedlots and livestock markets to prevent or detect the incursion of an emergency or foreign animal disease in Idaho. She works on the “trace-back” of livestock to the farm or market of origin in case an emergency disease gains entry into Idaho livestock.

The veterinary medical officer was hired to work on animal health emergency management issues. Since March of 2002, this person has re-written and finalized the Idaho Animal Health Emergency Management Plan (an appendix to the state’s emergency operations plan), facilitated the purchase of an animal health emergency response trailer and equipped it for use in case of an emer-

gency disease outbreak, and participated in the rule-writing process to develop the state’s “Rules Governing Animal Health Emergencies.” She has also managed the purchase of and coordinated employee training on equipment used for the destruction of diseased animals.

A cadre of private veterinary practitioners and technicians from all areas of Idaho was identified and trained to help state and/or federal animal health officials respond to an animal health emergency. This group of responders was named the Idaho Veterinary Emergency Response Team (IVERT). The veterinary medical officer arranged for the Department of Lands and Bureau of Disaster Services to deliver Incident Command System training to over 40 ISDA employees and over 100 IVERT members.



Idaho Trade Issues

For 2001-2005, the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) dedicated \$270,000 in grant funding to trade policy. Idaho agriculture’s core promotional strategy is to expand international markets and export development.

The funded activities amplified Idaho’s voice in international negotiations through improved distribution of Idaho’s Trade Issues Action Plan and Idaho Trade Facts Brochure. Coordination and communication have increased on trade disputes and phytosanitary issues being spearheaded by the office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) and the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Foreign Agriculture Service.

In 2002, trade issues and disputes arose that affected Idaho exports, specifically in apple shipments to Taiwan, Japan and Mexico and potato shipments to Mexico, China, Korea and

Canada. Market access has since been achieved for fresh potatoes to Mexico and corn seed to Australia.

Technical issues have become increasingly prevalent in trade policy as countries utilize non-tariff trade barriers to protect domestic producers. ISDA received federal grants to concentrate on access issues for potatoes, wheat, fruit and beans. Extensive research and briefings are supplying state officials with information to utilize during international trade discussions.

As Idaho’s voice becomes more effective, clear and precise in communicating to federal officials and international delegates, Idaho’s market access increases.

For more information, contact Mary Symms-Pollot at (208) 332-8538.



Pest & Disease Issues

Grant funding has been used for several projects at the Idaho State Department of Agriculture.

Detection surveys for exotic pests and disease are required to maintain current export markets and establish new markets, especially in Japan, Mexico, Korea, China and Taiwan. Grant funds have enabled ISDA to hire someone to oversee the revamping of survey work at the department.

A program combating apple maggots was brought into accordance with international standards. In addition, 740 samples of seed potatoes were tested for the presence of nematodes and potato mop-top virus. All results were negative.

A survey on commercial potatoes is nearing completion. 3,000 samples have been tested for nematode populations, and results are expected sometime in September.



University of Idaho Waste Management Research

A grant of \$175,000 was given to the University of Idaho to address critical waste issues within the state. The funds were split between two projects.

The project on nutrient management practices seeks to improve current educational projects that will ensure proper waste management. Curriculum has been developed for training nutrient management planners, as well as the end-users of the nutrient management plan. Six competitive mini-grants were awarded within the project to areas identified as needing more research.

The second project addressed under grant funds is entitled "Integrated Residue Management Systems for Sustained Seed Yield of Kentucky Bluegrass." This project started a Kentucky Bluegrass extension program that is working on research to maintain or increase bluegrass seed yield without burning. Regulations may soon disallow burning residue from Kentucky Bluegrass fields, and this grant is researching alternatives.

For more information on waste management research, please contact Rob Spear at (208) 885-6681.



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